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10/708,909	03/31/2004	Ronald W. Korzun	136483-1	2908
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CANTOR COLBURN, LLP 55 GRIFFIN ROAD SOUTH BLOOMFIELD, CT 06002			EXAMINER EDGAR, RICHARD A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3745	

DATE MAILED: 09/15/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Examiner Note

Applicants' submission of the complete claim listing filed 06 September 2006 is acknowledged. The requirement of using the specific status identifiers identified in 37 C.F.R. §1.121(c) has been relaxed, however, Applicants are encouraged to use the identifier "Previously presented" rather than "Previously Amended."

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 06 September 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicants have argued that is not obvious to apply the blade overcover of Ortolano (United States Patent No. 3,702,221) to vanes, like Pickering et al. (United States Patent No. 5,215,432) since there is not shown an overcover associated with vanes in either of the references. The examiner respectfully points out that the references were applied under 35 U.S.C. §103, which does not require a single reference to disclose every element recited in the claims.

Next, Applicants state "Pickering does not teach that stator blades are exposed to the same vibratory forces as rotor blades." And therefore, Applicants argue that there is no reason to combine the references. The examiner respectfully submits that Ortolano utilizes the inventive overcover to "minimize[s] the tangential and axial vibrational modes and minimize[s] the thermal bending stresses" (col. 1, lines 44-45).

The vanes of Pickering et al. are clearly exposed to the same tangential stresses as the rotor blades since each are in serial, axial arrangement in relation to the combustion gas flowpath. Therefore, the Ortolano reference teaches not only minimizing centrifugal stresses, as Applicants limit the reference to, but also minimizing tangential stresses.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3 and 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 3,702,221 (Ortolano hereinafter) in view of United States Patent No. 5,215,432 (Pickering et al. hereinafter).

Ortolano shows a group of airfoil blades for a turbine component comprising: multiple blades 36; multiple cover portions 38a, 38b defining a first surface configured to span tips of multiple adjacent blades between tip locations of adjacent blades (see FIG. 7) thereby to form the cover portions for adjacent blades and wherein the cover portions associated with each respective adjacent blade includes facing sides for adjacent cover portions of adjacent blades; and an over cover 34a, 34b coupled to a second surface opposite the first surface of the respective cover portions, the overcover capable of sealing the combustion gas flowpath and damping vibrations (see col. 1, lines 34-35).

The cover portions 38a, 38b include a tenon 39 extending therefrom and through an aperture in the overcover 34a, 34b.

The tenon is peened, or riveted, with respect to the overcover 34a, 34b (col. 4, line 42).

Ortolano only shows a rotor and associated rotor blades, and not an integrally covered nozzle and associated nozzle blades.

Pickering et al. teach that stator blades 12 which are serially arranged in stages with rotor blades, experience vibration forces leading to stress and fatigue failure of the vanes (see at least col. 1, lines 31-35).

Since Ortolano teach to reduce vibrations in turbomachinery rotor blades, and Pickering et al. teach that stator blades are exposed to the same vibratory forces as the rotor blades, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to apply the Ortolano teachings to a nozzle having an inner platform 14, as taught by Pickering et al. for the purpose of reducing the vibration forces experienced by the stator blades.

Claims 1-4, 10-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,238,368 (Ortolano '368 hereinafter) in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,315,641 (Mosser hereinafter) and further in view of United States Patent No. 5,215,432 (Pickering et al. hereinafter).

Ortolano '368 teaches a multiple group of blades comprising: multiple blades foils 12; multiple respective cover portions 17 defining a first surface 23 configured to span

tips of multiple adjacent blades between tip locations of adjacent blades thereby to form the cover portions for adjacent blades and wherein the cover portions associated with each respective adjacent blade include facing sides 18 for adjacent cover portions of adjacent blades. Each multiple respective cover portion includes a tenon 13 extending therefrom in the overcover. The tenon 13 is peened by riveting (col. 2, line 43). The blades further comprise a material buildup 19 on at least one facing side 18 of the cover portions, the material buildup having been machined to develop an interface between adjacent cover portions of adjacent blades (see col. 2, lines 58-65). The material buildup is applied by a selectively mechanical or metallurgical action on both facing sides of the cover portion (col. 2, lines 59-61). The material buildup 19 is applied between cover portions 17 on all adjacent blades thereby to effect integral covered blading (col. 2, lines 5-6). The blades include a selectively applied underweld or underbrazed 27 between a cover portion 17 and a blade tip thereby to effectively secure the cover portion to the blade (see col. 3, lines 33-34). The blades in the rotor are replaced in the rotor after the interface has been machined (see col. 4, lines 8-11). Buildup 20 on the circumferential outerface of the cover and circumferential innerface of the cover is machined (see col. 2, lines 62-68).

Ortolano '368 does not disclose an overcover coupled to a second surface opposite the first surface of the respective cover portion.

Mosser shows turbine blading with cover portions 15, whereby an overcover 16, having a thickness less than the cover portions 15 is provided for the purpose of connecting the blades 10 in groups. Since Ortolano '368 teaches to integrate turbine

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blading and Mosser teaches that an overcover 16 should be used to integrate turbine blading, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the Ortolano '368 turbine blading arrangement so that an overcover as taught by Mosser is applied to the rivets 13, for the purpose of integrating the turbine blading, thereby minimizing vibratory stresses.

Further, although Ortolano '368 and Mosser are directed to turbine blades and not stator blades, Pickering et al. teach that stator blades 12 which are serially arranged in stages with rotor blades, experience vibration forces leading to stress and fatigue failure of the vanes (see at least col. 1, lines 31-35).

Since Ortolano '368 teach to reduce vibrations in turbomachinery rotor blades, and Pickering et al. teach that stator blades are exposed to the same vibratory forces as the rotor blades, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to apply the Ortolano '368 teachings to a nozzle having an inner platform 14, as taught by Pickering et al. for the purpose of reducing the vibration forces experienced by the stator blades.

Claims 5, 14 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 3,702,221 (Ortolano hereinafter) in view of United States Patent No. 5,215,432 (Pickering et al. hereinafter) as applied to claims 1 and 10 above, and further in view of United States Patent No. 2,277,484 (Flanders hereinafter).

Ortolano in view of Pickering et al. as discussed above, teach a nozzle having an overcover attached through peened tenons, and therefore not welded.

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Flanders, however, teach that welding 28 (FIG. 4) as opposed to peening a tenon (FIGS. 1-2) is used for the purpose of fastening a shroud to the blade tips (sentence bridging pages 1 and 2). Further, welding 29 is also used to fix the shroud 30 to the blade tip (FIG. 7, page 2, lines 3-6)

Since Ortolano in view of Pickering et al. show a tenon deformed to fix outer shrouds to airfoil tips, and Flanders teaches to weld 29 the blade shroud as opposed to peening a tenon, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to weld the overcover to the shroud, as opposed to a using a tenon, as taught by Flanders, for the purpose of fixing the overcover without having a projection extending from the overcover.

Claims 4 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 3,702,221 (Ortolano '221 hereinafter) in view of United States Patent No. 5,215,432 (Pickering et al. hereinafter) as applied to claims 1 and 10 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,315,641 (Mosser hereinafter).

Ortolano '221 shows an overcover 34a, 34b which appears to be the same thickness as the cover portions 38a, 38b.

Mosser teaches an overcover 16 being thinner than the shroud 15 for the purpose of decreasing the weight of the rotor.

Since Ortolano '221 is a turbine rotor with two cover portions, and Mosser teaches to make the outer cover portion thinner than the inner cover to reduce the turbine rotor weight, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a

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person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the overcover 34a, 34b thicknesses thinner than the cover portions 38a, 38b for the purpose of decreasing the weight of the rotor.

Claims 6, 7, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 3,702,221 (Ortolano '221 hereinafter) in view of United States Patent No. 5,215,432 (Pickering et al. hereinafter) in view of United States Patent No. 2,277,484 (Flanders hereinafter) and further in view of United States Patent No. 5,238,368 (Ortolano '368 hereinafter).

Ortolano '221 in view of Pickering et al. as discussed with respect to claims 1-3, 5 above teach adjacent cover portions, but not a material buildup therebetween.

Ortolano '368 teaches in col. 2, lines 58-62 a material buildup between facing sides 18 of the cover portions for the purpose of integrating the cover portions. The blades are removed, weld built, and reassembled (see col. 4, lines 8-12). The weld buildup extends to the outer circumferential face 22 of the band 17 and the inner circumferential face 23 of the band 17 (see col. 2, lines 65-68). Since Ortolano '221 shows adjacent cover segments, and Ortolano '368 teaches to use a material buildup between adjacent cover segments, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to use a material buildup between adjacent Ortolano '221 cover segments as taught by Ortolano '368 for the purpose of integrating the cover portions.

Regarding claim 9, Ortolano '368 shows an underweld or underbrazed 27 in Fig. 3 for the purpose of strengthening the contact between the blade and the cover portion.

Since Ortolano '221 shows a joint between the blade and the cover portion, and Ortolano '368 teaches strengthening the joint between the blade and the cover portion, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the Ortolano '221 reference with an underweld or underbrazed as taught by Ortolano '368 for the purpose of strengthening the contact between the blade and the cover portion.

Claims 15, 16, 17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 3,702,221 (Ortolano '221 hereinafter) in view of United States Patent No. 5,215,432 (Pickering et al. hereinafter) and further in view of United States Patent No. 5,238,368 (Ortolano '368 hereinafter).

Ortolano '221 in view of Pickering et al. as discussed with respect to claims 10-12 above teach adjacent cover portions, but not a material buildup therebetween.

Ortolano '368 teaches in col. 2, lines 58-62 a material buildup between facing sides 18 of the cover portions for the purpose of integrating the cover portions. The blades are removed, weld built, and reassembled (see col. 4, lines 8-12). The weld buildup extends to the outer circumferential face 22 of the band 17 and the inner circumferential face 23 of the band 17 (see col. 2, lines 65-68). Since Ortolano '221 shows adjacent cover segments, and Ortolano '368 teaches to use a material buildup between adjacent cover segments, it would have been obvious at the time the invention

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was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to use a material buildup between adjacent Ortolano '221 cover segments as taught by Ortolano '368 for the purpose of integrating the cover portions.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

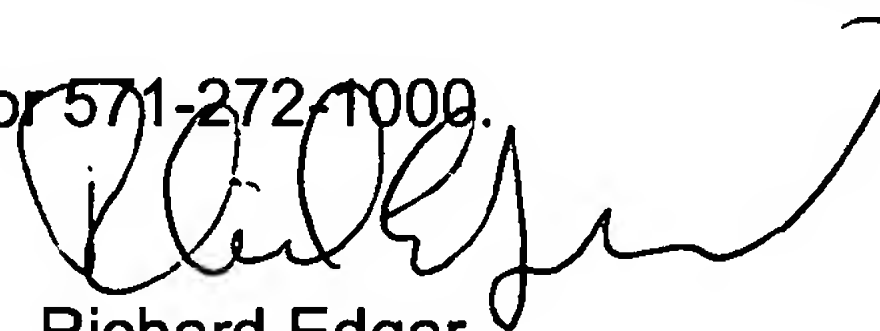
Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Richard Edgar whose telephone number is (571) 272-4816. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Thur. and alternate Fri., 7 am- 5 pm EST.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Look can be reached on (571) 272-4820. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Richard Edgar
Examiner
Art Unit 3745

RE